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ABSTRACT
APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR FACILITATING
ORDERING AND SUPPLY

5 A method and apparatus for ordering and facilitating the collection of items such as food items. A set of user terminals 12 may be distributed around a building, each user terminal 12 being connected to a central server 10. The central server 10 is also connected to one or more operator terminals 14 located in the building canteen. A user may order the food at the user terminal 12 by perusing a menu and making
10 selections. The user also inserts a smart card which serves to identify the user as an account holder in the central server 10 database. After making selections, the information is stored in the central server 10 and is collated so that the food items selected by all the users requiring food from the canteen are known by the central server 10 before some defined cut-off point in time. The collated order is then sent
15 by the central server 10 to the operator terminals 14 so that an appropriate number of each ordered food item can be prepared. To collect the food, the user simply inserts his smart card into an operator terminal 14 and his order is displayed. Preferably, the smart card is also used to transact payment of the food and the central server 10 may be connectable to the internet 22 so as to allow remote ordering by users and to allow
20 the central server 10 to order raw materials from suppliers in accordance with how much raw material has been actually used.

Figure 3